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ABSTRACT

Current and future prospects for workers' education in the Arab region, the relationship between Arab universities and workers' education, and the role of workers and their trade unions are discussed. In addition, examples of university activity in workers' education programs of some non-Arab countries are described. Although the climate is right for appraising accomplishments and possibilities for university assistance to workers' education, the main responsibility for the major decisions in workers' education must remain with the trade unions and other workers' organizations. Workers' education needs to consolidate general education designed for workers at large, to enhance special courses designed for union leaders, and to relate the content of programs to the economic and social framework within a particular country. A complicating factor is the alienation that has existed between the unions and the colleges, since colonialism in the Arab region focused attention on education for employees required for the administrative bodies. Proposals regarding Arab universities' activity in workers' education are offered, and examples of such activity are discussed for the following countries: France, Britain, the United States, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union. (SW)

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Role of the Arab Universities in Labour Education
A Comparative Study

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ROLE OF THE ARAB UNIVERSITIES IN LABOUR EDUCATION A COMPARATIVE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Universities' relationship to workers' education-relationship is going back to the end of the last century. Industrial development in the industrialised countries of that time led to the growth of a working class and their increasing role in production; it also brought about new tools and equipment, various rules, regulations and systems regulating labour and industrial relations, besides other developments necessary for the growth of industrial societies.

This affected the European and American universities which then existed and a start was made in the field of adult education; but this early beginning did not pay attention to the problem of literacy or that of workers' education or even that of general culture. It rather focussed on studies connected with industrial relations, labour legislation and wages, besides other fields in which developing industry

required further study, more variation and new trained cadres[1].

The working class, however, found in the universities of those days institutions aimed at consolidating the capitalist authority with all what this implied of human exploitation. The workers further found that the universities' role in adult education aimed at inculcation capitalistic concepts, confounding the workers' struggle and establishing the roots of class co-operation, that is, co-operation between employers, governments and workers. So, from the very beginning, the working class got suspicious of this activity; they met it with extreme caution and apprehension. Mr. Thomas Hood Jeskin wrote in the 'Mechanic's Journal' (1823)[2]:

> "The education of free people is voluntarily orientated in their interest when they have control over it ... but it might be better for men to live without education ... rather than receive learning at the hands of their masters."

In the light of this outlook Ruskin College, which was set up by Oxford University in 1899 as a permanent and specialised Labour College affiliated to it, met with strong resistance from trade unionists in the beginning of this century and they tried to set up a 'Central Labour College' as a rival educational centre.

These apprehensions did not come to an end, for we find them in an article by F. Otricksen in the 'Industrial and Labour Relations Bulletin' (January 1952), reading thus:[3]

"Trade unions were - and still are - suspicious of the efforts exerted by universities to invade the field of industrial relations and workers' education. They believe that the boards of administrations of most universities, and more than the majority of the administrators and members of the teaching staff of the colleges, held views similar to those of the employers ... that is, they had little or no understanding of the problems and aspirations of workers ... particularly of manual workers in the field of industry."

The working class and their trade unions developed and so did their feelings and their need for further education. The development of adult education programmes in universities, with the latter covering all the expenses incurred, and increased participation by workers in the planning and preparation of these programmes decreased the worker's suspicions towards the universities and this led him to accept the universities' activities in this field. Such activity increased and extended from adult to workers' education; it went beyond the stage of including some minor topics within the programmes of some universities to the stage of expansion in the field of extra-mural studies. After that, specialized institutes for workers' education were set up in co-operation with trade union organizations.[4]

The universities understood that they could not continue to live in 'ivory towers'[5], isolated from the people. Worker's movements have started gaining strength and workers have started getting ready to

educate themselves. In England, the Workers Education Association was formed and similar organisations cropped up throughout the country. Universities made arrangements for some lectures to be delivered in the university halls in the evening for this category of people. The movement further expanded and some universities set up divisions for public services. These divisions organised lectures on social, economic and political systems at local, regional and international levels; lectures also covered problems facing the individual or the family, demographic and cultural problems, scientific and technological issues and many other related topics. This developed into seminars, study groups, workshops, film shows, theatrical representations and musicals. The programmes offered were also quite varied, some dealt with languages, while others covered general topics, such as secretarial duties, elementary science, psychology and auto-mechanics among various other subjects.

This movement developed and its pattern varied in universities all over the world. It gave a momentum to the field of authorship and many books appeared in simplified and clear forms, remote from the complexities of the difficult texts which were used in the classic academic university trend. Among such books, which appeared in the thirties of this century, one can recall 'How to Behave' by A.E. Heath in psychology; in economics, there was 'The Economic System' by G.D.H. Cole and in literature, there was 'How to Read Literature' by Wilkinson. There were many other easy and good scientific books on capitalism, music,

engineering, mathematics, finance, the Industrial Revolution, co-operatives, besides other works in logic, philosophy and administration. All this proved equally useful to the university students, as well as to students enrolled at the public service divisions[6].

In Russia, centres for science and culture, as well as scientific clubs, were set up. Many countries established some sort of liaison between university workers and those engaged in scientific, technological and technical branches of industry, and China brought about an integration between science and work in all stages.

Popular movements gained momentum as scientific movements developed and universities grew up with this bent, like the Brunnell University in England and the University of Technology in Istanbul. Prior to this, polytechnic schools appeared in Egnland, heralding a revolution against the private aristocratic schools[7].

In this respect, the Arab region differs greatly from the European and American countries where, despite the emergence of trade union organizations since the end of the last century and the establishment of universities from the beginning of this century, the universities took no interest in adult education except in the last few years. This interest started with some studies offered in certain faculties on topics related to industrial relations and to labour in general; some universities afterwards set up divisons for extra-mural studies[8].

Until now, this activity has not reached the field of workers' education. Unlike trade union organizations in the European and American countries, Arab trade union organizations have not called for cooperation from universities in the field of workers' education. Moreover, Arab universities, apart from those in Egypt and a few Arab countries, are still far from such education and this undoubtedly explains why Arab workers still have lingering suspicions and apprehensions towards the universities. It further explains why Arab universities, which have been influenced from their very inception by British and French universities, are still remote from society and the main issues confronting it and from the tremendous social and economic developments taking place in the Arab world.[9]

However, the growth of the Arab working class, the growing significance of their activities in every field, the economic, social and political developments in the region and the new look at education in general - including university education - have imposed a new look on the relationships between universities and worker's education.

In this respect, the study will focus on the following main topics:

1) The role of workers and their trade union organizations in the Arab region.
2) Workers'education: its present and future.
3) Arab universities and workers' education.

4) Examples of university activity in the workers' education programmes of some non-Arab countries.

5) Proposals regarding Arab universities' activity in workers' education.

1. The Role of Workers and Their Trade Union Organizations in the Arab Region.

Trade union organizations in the Arab region started with the advent of industry and the increased magnitude and significance of the working class. The end of the last century saw the beginning of these organizations in Egypt, and they soon spread to other parts of the Arab world in the first quarter of this century. Although the workers grouped themselves into labour unions since that time, they did not succeed in obtaining this right legally, except in 1942 when the first labour legislation was promulgated in Egypt, recognising the workers' right to group themselves into unions to protect their interests. With the industrial development of the region, the size of the working class increased, their trade union organizations grew in strength and their struggle intensified for improved working conditions, prevention of exploitation and guarantee of all their rights. Following the consolidation of the trade union organizations at a national level, the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions was set up in 1956 to lead and co-ordinate their activities at a regional level.[10]

Side by side, with their struggle in the economic and trade union fields, the workers and their trade union organizations waged their struggle in the political field. They played a leading role in the political fight for independence and against colonialism in all its forms.

In the beginning of the sixties, some Arab countries started to adopt a non-capitalist system of development; some of them chose the socialist system. In all cases, the Arab countries started taking an interest in the development of their societies on a comprehensive basis, that is, economic, social and political development aiming to take society from a stage of under-development to that of progress and development.[11]

To achieve this, their interest had to be focussed on the human aspect of development. Hence, the increased significance of the role of workers and their trade union organizations. They started to occupy leading positions in all the economic, social and political organs of the state.

All this had its impact on trade union organizations. Labour unions began to have organs administered on improved scientific techniques, as they were required to discuss all the laws which came into force and to present the workers' views regarding these new laws. They were also called upon to discuss the state's development plans and various other policies, such as those governing education, labour, housing, supplies and provisions, social insurance, health etc.

This also affected the workers themselves, as they had to lead these increasingly important trade union organizations. They had to represent workers in organs, councils and boards of various specialisations, whether they were political, such as people's or national assemblies and political organizations, or economic (like boards of directors of companies, establishments and factories), or social, (like government institutions catering for social insurance and related services), or executive organs at ministerial, governorate or other administrative levels.[12]

As these developments led the workers and their trade unions to such leading positions, it became necessary to educate and train them to enable them to become an effective, productive and decisive element in this new situation. These developments further necessitated improvements in the training of trade union leaders, as regards duration and curricula, to enable them to rise to the level of the new functions and responsbilities devolving upon them.

Any shortage of such training or education in the present circumstances is something very serious and is bound to have a negative effect on the workers and their organizations, on the new role of workers in the region and on society and its future development plans.

A Conference on the Role of Universities and Colleges in Workers' Education was held in November 1973 in Geneva, sponsored by the International Labour Organization (ILO). In the report of this conference, there is an affirmation of policies followed by the labour organizations

and, in addition, conclusions that point to new directions and initiatives that should be followed[13].

The 20 participants stated that the primary responsibility for workers' education and training lies with the organizations themselves. As a general rule, trade unions should develop their own training activities to form a base from which they can seek the complementary assistance of educational institutions in the broader aspects of workers' education. The need for collaboration between unions and universities was unanimously recognized and, especially in respect of financing, it was necessary and desirable to emphasize that workers' education, by definition, is an integral part of the public system[14].

By way of a working definition, workers' education was considered "as covering all educational activities relating to workers associated in any way with the labour movement or agreeing to receive training under the aegis of the representative labour organizations and undertaken with a view to promoting the collective advancement of labour, while contributing to the personal development of all those able to participate in them"[15].

It is the conviction of the ILO that there is now an increasing awareness of the vital importance of workers' education and that, for a variety of reasons, the climate is right for a careful appraisal of past achievements, present programmes and future possibilities in this field of university assistance to workers' education. However, it should be made perfectly clear at the outset that the main responsibility for the

major decisions in workers' education must remain, as always, with the trade unions and other workers' organizations.[16]

2. Workers' Education: Its Present and Future

Workers in the Arab region have taken an interest in workers' education since the establishment of trade union organizations. The history of workers' education in Egypt, since the beginning of this century, has placed on record the labour schools which emerged in the twenties and the improved workers' newspapers issued during that period. Since World War II and with the growth of the trade union organizations, several labour unions in Egypt started carrying out their own education programmes. As this movement developed, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour co-operated with the trade unions in this field. These efforts led to the establishment in 1961 of an institution for workers' education in Egypt - the first institution of its kind in the Arab region. Egypt's experiment had its impact on most of the other Arab countries, which followed almost the same pattern. There are presently institutions, institutes or permanent centres for workers' education in the following twelve Arab countries:[17] Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and the Democratic Republic of Yemen. In other Arab countries, there are workers' education activities, some of which are on a wide scale and are relatively developed, as in Tunisia, but there are no permanent organs for worker's education.

The institutions in some of these countries stemmed from trade union organizations, as in Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Democratic Republic of Yemen and Kuwait. There is, however, an inter-dependence between trade union organizations and governments in institutions of other countries.[18]

It should be noted that trade union organizations in the Arab region do not try to resort to universities in the field of workers' education, though they have recourse to some university professors, as lecturers in their institutes and centres. Moreover, even governments in countries which supervise workers' education do not try to resort to universities.

The course of workers' education since its early start to the present time, has shown a pressing need for the consolidation of the general education destined for workers at large, besides the enhancement of special courses designed for trade union leaders. The current programmes and materials do not meet the required needs, nor do they provide the appropriate amount of knowledge and information to workers and trade union leaders, whether in the trade union organizations or in the government organs where workers are represented. That is why institutions for workers' education in the Arab region are currently engaged in a drive to develop themselves in order to extend education to the greatest possible number of workers and to provide an appropriate amount of up-to-date information and knowledge to the trade union leaders.

The participants of the Conference on the Role of Universities and Colleges in Workers' Education stated in this respect that content of programmes and materials must be related to the economic and social framework within a particular country, whether it be a highly industrialized society or one in which considerable development lies ahead. Five points were listed[19]:

- to educate workers in such a way that they join trade unions organizations and participate in their activities and form workers' organizations where they do not exist;
- to train members of workers' organizations to more effectively participate in the running of these organizations;
- to develop the technical capacities of trade union officers;
- to promote the effective particpation of workers' organizations in the choice of objectives and in the development process of the societies and communities to which they belong;
- to help everyone to understand the objectives of workers' organizations and to promote an interest in the labour movement.

To develop leaders' training, some institutions for workers' education in the Arab region have started to think of setting up workers' universities, i.e. higher educational organs capable of assuming the responsibility of this type of education in future. The workers' movement and the workers' education institutions in Egypt took the lead in this field and in 1975, the establishment of the first Workers' University was announced in Cairo[20].

3. Arab Universities and Workers' Education

Arab universities started coming into existence at the beginning of this century and they were influenced to a great extent by British and French universities. During their long history, children of workers and farmers were debarred from them bacause of the circumstances prevailing then in the Arab society, the poor economic conditions of the workers and farmers, the type of officials who supervised the universities and the system of government itself which was afraid of educating the masses.[21]

Developments which subsequently took place in the region, particularly from the beginning of the sixties, brought about free university education. This opened the doors of the universities to the children of workers and peasants. However, it should be noted that the programmes and curricula of universities did not undergo the expected changes; they remained as they were: remote from the labour thought and other issues connected with workers, farmers and society in general.

This, however, led to the emergence of a serious phenomenon, namely the alienation of most of the children of workers and farmers, who joined the universities from their class, because of their exposure throughout their university education to ancient programmes and curricula. Because of this they, did not make any significant contributions towards the development of this class after graduation and they themselves did not help in developing the universities, although many

of them assumed leading positions in some universities. As a result of this, matters came to such a head that some trade union organizations, particularly in Egypt, debarred university graduates from becoming members. In this way, a serious gap between the working and the educated classes developed which was bound to have an unfavourable impact on society and its development. Today, in the midst of the important developments which have taken place in the Arab region, everyone feels the seriousness of this situation and the eventual dangerous outcome of its perpetuation. Everyone realises that a speedy remedy should be found for such a threat which is being increasingly felt.[22]

In the past, education - including university education - was considered as part of the services sector and this led to a considerable alienation of the universities from the socio-economic developments which took place in the region; it also cut off the universities' relationship with development plans which have absorbed the region's interest during the past few years. This outlook has now changed and what is spent on education is no longer considered as an unproductive expenditure under the heading of services. It has rather become an investment with economic returns and its allocations now represent part of investments in development plans. But this kind of investment is somehwat different from other investments in various economic fields of activity. It is difficult to define its returns with accuracy, nor is it easy to link such returns with any specifice period or time-limit,

because the very process itself - which means provision of knowledge and skills to the individual - starts yielding its returns when the individual ends his education and it is subjected to various considerations after that.

This view, which considers education as an investment, makes it difficult for universities to remain mere organs, devoted to learning only; their efforts for learning have rather become a means of developing society itself, so as to improve standards of living and ensure the people's welfare. Moreover, universities are required to devote more attention to practical as well as applied studies and to main issues confronting society and people engaged in social work, that is, the productive force in society.

Apart from the developments which have taken place in most Arab countries, affording workers a leading role in the direction and administration of society, this new concept of education has led Arab universities to enter the field of adult education. Yet this is carried out on a very limited scope through divisions of extra-mural studies in some universities or through the offering of subjects related to labour and industrial relations in the programmes and curricula of some faculties. Up to now[23], Arab universities have not joined the field of workers' education by devoting any interest to it in their programmes or by co-operating with trade union organizations in the administration of joint workers' institutes. This is an issue which has to be taken into consideration, because workers are today participating in the

administration of government organs, and this intricate process requires an advanced level of knowledge and various skills; it further necessitates the improvement of the cultural and vocational level of the working class. The Arab universities have likewise shown no interest in workers' education by imbuing their various educational programmes at all levels (from primary to university) with studies on the working class, their thought, history and functions, so that all cultured persons may be equipped with such knowledge, helping them co-operate with the working class of this joint administration.

Dealing with content, the participants of the Conference on the Role of Universities and Colleges in Workers' Education noted that workers' organizations were urged to help universities and colleges to review their criteria regarding trade unions. It was recognized that distrust of universities and other educational institutions still exists, although this might be more marked in countries where universities are still wholly under the control of government.

What do unions expect from universities? Here, the Conference listed three points[24]:

a) training in social and economic matters, including promotion of knowledge of labour history;
b) theoretical and action-oriented research based on union experience, as well as to open new fields of experience;
c) training in teaching methods to improve the quality of teaching undertaken by the trade unions.

Following up on this, the report of the Conference includes this paragraph:[25] "Workers' education and the university are based on a common concept of general culture which should be capable of promoting a critical sense and not just technical know-how. The university should be able to develop the intellectual skills required in all sorts of situations, e.g., the ability to press issues in collective bargaining; the process of thinking and the ability to negotiate, to express ideas and to communicate, to develop intellectual sensiblities rather than technical details".

In addition, it was stated that universities, by their activities, can help the trade unions by informing an often ill-informed public and by offering facilities at all levels, such as meeting rooms and weekend residential centres. They might also offer library services to workers, organize courses to train social scientists specialized in labour problems and provide study material on questions of trade union concern and interest.

4. Examples of University Activity in the Workers' Education Programmes of Some Non-Arab Countries

Colonialism was the main stumbling block on the way of education in the Arab region. Interest used to be focussed on nothing but a specific type of education which used to form the employees and manpower required

for the administrative bodies. Schools and universities were like mere ivory towers, for education used to be considered as an end in itself, and very few universities, if any, used to run programmes of studies for adults

In fact, now there is only a very limited number of educational institutions in the Arab region which are open to members of the communities living therein, and an even smaller number of Arab universities which have set up divisions for the service of adults[26].

It is also a fact that the role of Arab universities in labour education in the Arab region has not been a subject of proper study. Regardless of the traditional extra-mural activities of universities in the Arab region, there is an obvious need for making use of the Arab universities and their affiliated departments through efforts which are being exerted in the field of labour education, either in the training of adult workers, in scientific research or in enriching the field of labour education and other related fields.

This study is nothing more than a preliminary attempt at reviewing, analysing and discussing the role of Arab universities in the field of labour education in the light of an analytical study of some experiences of foreign countries in this domain, with the aim of coming forward with some proposals which might be laid at the disposal of officials responsible for universities in the Arab region.

Despite the significance, vital character and manifold aspects of this topic, the author found that the available sources and references were inadequate to enable him to present this study at the standard aimed for.

The writer wants to define the systematic line of thought which he has chosen for this study. The comparative method used in the study means analysis of the existing conditions in the Arab region, as regards the part played by Arab universities in labour education, must be added on the cultural reality which the writer has in fact come to know through his feelings, experience, study and interaction with the past, in terms of time, and with the present, in terms of place. Yet an envision of the role of the Arab region's universities in this field should be based on a broader and more comprehensive view which comprises a study and analysis of the role of universities in labour education in the foreign countries which have made huge strides forward in this field. Research in educational systems and experiments is no doubt something which is far from being simple: it requires study and anlysis of several aspects dealing with historical roots as well as geographical, political, religious and cultural factors; it further calls for a survey of the nature of educational values and the philosophy dealing with the mode of life chosen by any society and with the principles adopted by it.

If any research scholar wants to study some aspects or features of education in more than one country, and if he wants to get acquainted

with the educational reforms and the methods and techniques some countries employ to deal with their educational problems, he will indeed come across difficulties in knowing the beginning and the end of the educational process. He will similarly find it difficult to analyse the deep and forceful characteristics behind these educational systems and their problems. Yet, the very fact of reaching some points of similarity or dissimilarity in some experiments of other countries, a study of the underlying reason and an attempt at getting to know the factors which led to the success or failure of countless efforts exerted by other countries.... all this can be a guideline for us in the Arab region and it can give us the green light to start some pioneering attempts at making use of these experiments in the field of national education on condition that the peculiar nature of local and national circumtstances be taken into consideration.

In view of this methodology, the writer will review some of the experiences which have been exerted throughout history and the present in labour education in foreign countries and will point out the part played by universities in this respect.

Interest by European and American universities in workers' education developed through their activity in the field of adult education. When divisions were set up for adult education, they were filled with huge masses who, because of their economic situation, had been unable to acquire an adequate formal education. As large sections of these masses belonged to the working class, it was quite natural that universities

had to gradually devote increasing attention to them and thus get in touch with trade union organizations which, in turn, were in growing need of assistance in the field of workers' education. This gradually led several of these universities to organise programmes and set up permanent centres and institutes for workers' education[27].

The governments of several European and American states encouraged such co-operation; there emerged a trend towards organising and codifying the conflict opposing workers to capital in accordance with generally agreed rules in industrial relations.

As the trade unions were not in a position to bear the expenses of this activity, it was necessary to find a solution to the problem. At first, encouragement was given to the establishment of joining councils, comprising governments and trade union organizations, to supervise workers' education activities and to channel finance extended by governments for that purpose. To dispel the workers' apprehensions from government financing, it was decided to turn to the universities .... the only organs which could group together all the parties in their scientific neutrality. Despite the doubts and apprehensions which prevailed among trade union organizations towards even the universities, the scientific activity and increased participation by trade union organizations in university programmes related to workers' education, considerably minimised these doubts.

Universities' activities in this field developed from merely running limited courses in adult education, to establishing independent institutes and colleges within the framework of the university for workers' studies[28].

The Capitalist Countries

A) France

There are seven workers' institutes within the framework of the following seven main universities[29]: Paris, Sceaux, Grenoble, Strasbourg, Aix-en-Provence, Nancy, Lyon and Bordeaux.

These institutes are financed through allocations earmarked in the universities' budgets and through grants extended by the ministries of education and labour. The burdens of these institutes have been greatly relieved by the growing trend of the workers' councils in various establishments to compensate workers, who join courses offered by these institutes, for any lossses they suffer in their wages; this is a commitment which was previously met by the institutes. Things have been made easier by companies of the public sector which have started granting their workers paid study leaves.

The courses offered by these institutes are quite varied. Some are run in agreement with the three main labour unions in France and in accordance with their needs; others are organised to study general topics which are of interest to the workers.

B) Britain

University activity in workers' education is considered as one of the most ancient experiment and goes back to the first years of the trade union movement in Britain by the end of the last century, when the move felt the pressing need for educating its cadres and leaders to enable them to carry out their various trade union and political duties. The trade union movement turned to the universities for assistance and the universities - including such long established ones like Oxford and Cambridge - responded favourably to that trend. Joint committees were set up between the universities and the workers' education institution to organise workers' education programmes with the universities' stores of knowledge to respond to the needs of the trade union movement.

In 1899, Oxford University set up 'Ruskin College' to afford labour union cadres and leaders who had not obtained sufficent formal education, opportunities for general education very close to the academic university level. The success of this College encouraged six other universities to set up similar colleges.

These colleges award their graduates certificates which are recognised by the Ministry of Education and by other universities. They are equivalent to pre-university level certificates and entitle their holders to pursue their university education so as to obtain their B.A. degree. Though the establishment of these colleges was not aimed at enabling trade unionists to obtain higher university degress, about

about two-thirds of those studying at these colleges continue their university education to subsequently work in divisions of research and technical studies in trade unions or as workers' educators.

In the wake of World War I, British universities started setting up divisions for extra-mural studies, where educational programmes were organised at nearly academic levels outside the scope of formal university programmes. Most of those universities were careful to follow the example of Oxford University in setting up joint committees with the workers' educational institution to supervise programmes organised for the workers.

The financing of the universities' activities in the field of workers' education came from the Ministry of Education and Sciences which defrayed approximately 75% of the expenses involved, apart from grants and donations which the universities obtained for that purpose[30].

C) United States of America

The number of universities currently engaged in workers' education has reached 35 in the U.S. This activity started at the divisons of extra-mural studies of those universities.

Co-operation between American universities and labour unions in the field of workers' education has gone through various stages of doubts and conflict. In the beginning, some universities used to object

to the participation of trade-unionists as lecturers in these programmes. Some unions, likewise, refused to allow non-members to participate in such programmes.

But as the years went by, some features of this co-operation started appearing in the form of advisory committees, comprising the universities concerned and the trade unions which entered within their scope of activity. The university used to take the advice of such committees in all matters related to the organization of its workers' education programmes, including such issues as the choice of the director responsible for the programmes, the selection of the lecturers and the topics to be studied besides the definition of admission fees.

In spite of the developments in such co-operation, the acceptance by the 35 universities of the unions' aspirations regarding the contents of these programmes is still limited, particularly as regards topics like workers' strikes and techniques used to stage them, organization of trade union activity and the role of workers in politics.

Labour unions are always striving to enlist government support for workers' education programmes at the universities to relieve themselves of part of the onerous burdens they are bearing in this respect. They are forced to give those participating in the courses, which are run in co-operation with one of the universities, compensation for the wages they lose when attending such courses. In recent years[31], a trend has emerged according to which some corporations, educational

institutions and individuals have started devoting grants and donations to finance such programmes; even some companies have shown their readiness, through agreements with the unions concerned, to meet some of the expenses of their workers who take part in these programmes.

D) Canada

In Canada, there is a great deal of activity, involving educational institutions and governments on the one hand and unions on the other, in respect of workers' education. Canada has been a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since it was founded in 1919 as part of the now defunct League of Nations.

As for Canadian structures, there are a number of structures to be mentioned[32]: The Labour College of Canada has as co-sponsors, McGill Unversity, Université de Montréal and the Canadian Labour Congress with a Board of Governors drawn from the three bodies. A strong and influential advisory committee, drawn from area unions and labour councils, have been functioning for several years at the Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology. Similar structures have existed at St. Francis Xavier University, Dalhousie University, McMaster University and the University of Manitoba for a long time. In this connection it should be pointed out that the programme of the Atlantic Region Labour Education Centre (ARLEC), which is financed by the Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion, is under the administrative

direction of a seven-person board of which five are drawn from the labour movement.

It is also true, in Canada as elsewhere, that the educational institutions are increasingly concerned with education for trade unionists and they are seeking ways and means to work with the ILO on programmes which can be arranged on a mutually satisfactory basis. Significantly, these institutions are reappraising their role in education with special reference to the community and the groups within which it may be served.

In the report of the Conference on the Role of Universities and Colleges in Workers' Education (1973), there is an affirmation of policies followed by the Canadian Labour Congress and, in addition, conclusions that point to new directions and initiatives to be followed.

All participants of this Conference[33] recognized that the structures set up, whether of a consultative or programming nature, must vary in accordance with the nature of the institutions and the trade unions themselves. Such structures, which must be based on mutual respect and understanding between the unions and the universities, should be responsible for decisions regarding programme and content, the teachers, financial arrangements and the required administrative controls.

The Socialist Countries

The establishment of the adult education system (including workers' education) in the socialist countries of Europe was brought to a conclusion between the 1960's and 1970's, in regard to the system, organization, structure, theory, dimensions of research and staff training; there are nevertheless certain coordinates that determine the joint characteristics as follows[34]:

1) The socialist development of society.
2) The development of science and technology.
3) The acceptance of the philosophy of lief-long education
4) The linking of work and education as a factor and means of festering the overall development of the personality.
5) The professionalization of adult education.

In each Socialist country's education as a whole, and particularly the instruction and education of adults including workers, is a reflection of society and social relations. In the past two decades education has developed dynamically at all levels. This dynamic develpment has been evident in the field of adult education. Universities have not remained aloof from this process. It may be confidently asserted that they have been a significant agency of this development, contributing directly and indirectly to adult education. By direct contribution, we mean the possibility of adults obtaining an education at institutions of higher education, returning to education from the

world of work, or educating themselves without leaving work. Institutions of higher education have adapted their organization to the needs of people whom we include in the category of 'adults'. In some Socialist countries (USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, GDR), workers, who obtain an education at institutions of higher learning, receive special social, moral and material incentives. These incentives consist of shortened working hours (daily and weekly), paid leaves of absence for education and the coverage of material outlays involved in education. The percentage of working students ranges up to 50% of the total student body (USSR, Hungary, Yugoslavia). There are some institutions of higher education in which the number of workers students is greater than the number of regular students. In some Socialist countries (USSR, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia) a network of correspondence instruction with intensive consultations in the course of studies has been developed[35].

Aside from correspondence studies with tutorial methods, networks of winter and summer schools (e.g. GDR) have been developed to permit wage-earners to supplement their studies with intensive instruction and to facilitate contact and counseling with instructors. In some Socialist countries (USSR, GDR, Yugoslavia), in-service training after graduation is legally regulated and not left to the good intentions of individuals.

The most important common factor, determining the development of workers' education in the Socialist countries, is the interrelation of

work and education, not only as a path to knowledge, but also as a method of fostering overall personality development. Proceeding from the function that work has in personality development, particular attention is paid in the East European countries to the linking of work and adult education. Proceeding from the ideas of the founders of Marxism, regarding the relation between work and education, in a number of countries, reforms of the system of education and instruction have been aimed at a closer interlinking of educational institutions, economic organizations and social services. The economy and social services have manifested themselves as significant partners of education and particularly adult education. As part of the economy, new educational planning, programming and organization services have emerged. These are not only concerned with the vocational education of working people, but they also extend to socio-political, cultural and health education and even to education for national defence. Thus, the economy has manifested itself as a factor in the integral education of working people. This has opened new opportunities for cooperation between institutions of higher education and the economy, singificantly expanding the dimensions of adult education. In some countries (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia) an entire microsystem of education for working people has been formed, encompassing all levels of education and extending from elementary to higher education and further to life-long in-service training. The economy manifests itself as a learning and educational environment for a number of areas of human knowledge[36]. In the East European

countries, a significant process of labour exchange has begun, linking the economy and institutions of higher learning and other educational institutions. The exchange is one of the major questions, facing all countries in confronting the 21st century. In some countries (e.g. Rumania), governments have passed decrees on the integration of higher education and production, aimed at linking work, education and research. Growing ties between higher education and production, particularly in the field of research, have been stressed in the Soviet Union

Stressing common characteristics should not be interpreted as disregard for the unique national characteristics (social, economic, cultural, historcial) that leave their imprint on workers' education in each country. We shall briefly outline some of the unique features of the role of the university in workers' education in selected East European countries; a more extensive description would require more space than is available.

A) Czechoslovakia

There has traditionally been a positive orientation to labour education in Czechoslovakia[37], which has also been one of the factors affecting the formation of a multifaceted and flexible workers' education system. Higher education occupies a special place and makes a particular contribution in this system. In the last two decades, a significant expansion took place in the number of adults, particularly

those from the ranks of the working class, participating in higher education. A so-called 'second educational path' was developed at institutions of higher education in Czechoslovakia. This 'path' has been particularly expanded through the development of various forms of education and in-service training following graduation. The basis of the 'second educational path' is to permit the continuation of studies without interruption of work. It allows the attainment of post-graduate degrees at universities. The economy and social services are interested in materially stimulating this in the number of adults working, as well as studying at institutions of higher education. The combination of work and study is very diverse and flexible in Czechoslovakia. Possibilities include correspondence study, a return to education from the world of work (in accordance with the needs of the employing institution in research work) and, less frequently, evening study which is more highly developed in the Soviet Union.

B) Hungary

Higher education in Hungary proceeds from the goals which Hungarian society has set for education. Accordingly, the role of the university in workers' education is seen as the path to the democratization of higher education. In Hungary, workers who have not completed secondary school, may attend university if they have previously completed a ten-month preparatory course and demonstrated their ability to understand

instructior at the level of higher education. During this time, they retain the rights and benefits their employment entitles them to (full pay, health benefits and social security).

At Hungarian universities[38], there are two forms of workers' education; (a) evening courses and, (b) correspondence courses. The programme orientation of these two forms of education does not differ from that of the regular studies of students between 18 and 24. Studies at the medical and fine arts faculties may not be undertaken without leaving one's job.

In recent years, there has been stress on the need for recurrent education, particularly for the working class as the leading social force. Returning to studies encompasses all educational levels and takes place periodically at intervals of 5 to 8 years. Working people are expected to refresh their knowledge in this period and specialize in their occupations. Although recurrent education has been set up on a voluntary basis, enterprises have the right to make recurrent education obligatory for certain professions.

C) Yugoslavia

The 1970's have been marked by consolidation of the philosopphy of life-long education. A reform of the system of instruction and education is being carried out on this theoretical foundation. This process has been stimulated by the new constitution and the decisions of

political and governmental bodies, prescribing that education and instruction be linked with and alternate with work. The concept that young people take up work earlier and return to education has become a key issue in the current reform of the system of instruction and education in Yugoslavia[39]. Institutions of higher education cannot remain aloof from these changes. They have been criticized for failing to devote sufficient attention to people who are working and gaining an education.

In recent years there has not only been an increase in the number of university centres, but also an outstanding increase in the number of students attending them. Particularly at two-year short-cycle higher educational establishments, the number of working students has grown to exceed the number of regular students. The current reform of the system of higher education is based on the principles of the alternation of work and education, creating new opportunities for the education of workers. Changes are aimed at making institutions of higher education centres for life-long education. They are being asked to open their doors not only to people who wish to acquire defined qualifications, but also to people who wish to acquaint themselves with certain fields of science and culture, without intending to take exams and acquire degrees. This paves the way to striking a balance between education leading to diplomas and education as a way of life for contemporary man.

The process of the dispersal of university centres in Yugoslavia begun in the 1960's and has continued to grow. New university centres have a significant effect on the economic and cultural development of their surroundings. The democratization of higher education implies meeting the needs of students. This means establishing ties with enterprises, opening consultation centres outside the home-town of institutions of higher education and the development of modern forms of communication with working students.

A process of close collaboration between institutions of higher education, the economy and the social services has gotten under-way: this is a process which is to lead to an exchange of labour between those who utilize education and those who provide educational services. The state does not mediate in this process, as was the case with the traditional conception of education. In as much as more mature people will be returning to school, with personal and working experience, this tendency in educational development calls for changes in the internal organization and structure of institutions of higher education. The economy as a whole is becoming a significant factor in higher education in Yugoslavia. It plays a role, not only in financing higher education, but also in excercising influence on the shaping of plans and programmes and the planning of personnel development; in addition, it serves as a learning environment. Research and development centres in the economy and modern technolgy (increasingly adopted by the Yugoslav economy) are utilized for educational purposes.

D) Soviet Union

Both the scientific-technical revolution and the democratization of education have determined the increasing attention institutions of higher education in the Soviet Union are devoting to the problems of workers' education[40]. Adults and youth may obtain a higher education at three types of institutions; two-year short-cycle higher education establishments, institutes and universities. The practice of admitting to institutions of higher learning students with work experience is widely accepted in the Soviet Union. At one time, this was in fact a condition for admission to these institutions. This has offered enormous opportunities for working people to return to studies, increasing the workers' population at various levels of study, so that today the percentage of such students exceeds 50% of the entire student body of institutions of higher education.

In the Soviet Union, the General Federation of all the trade unions of the Soviet Union assume full responsibility of educating all workers. It has two Colleges, one in Moscow and one in Leningrad, for higher labour studies. They are empowered to award higher degrees (Masters' and Doctorates) in worker's history and economics. Moreoever, all over the Soviet Union there are what is known as 'people's universities'. They are jointly set up by worker's unions, popular organizations and other local executive organs, to help workers improve their vocational skills and their general knoweldge.

There are also official higher institutes which help workers, who are willing to complete their formal university education, to acquire the academic standard required for joining universities.

In the Soviet Union, development is being given both to regular studies and studies for those continuing regular employment. The latter form of studies has been set up at evening schools and correspondence shools. There is a highly developed network of such schools. Persons who work and study, obtain social and material incentives (public recognition, leaves of absence for counselling and exams, improved opportunities for vocational advancement, etc.). Evening and correspondence studies ordinarily last one year longer than regular studies. In this way, a large number of Soviet citizens have attained high professional qualifications, contributing to the advance of society and the economy. Studies at evening and correspondence shools are viewed as a matter of enormous social significance. Students are responsible for the quality of their studies, not only to institutions of higher education, but also to their working collectives which make it possible for them to pursue their studies.

Foreign Experiences - An Analytical View

A significant feature, which has characterised workers' education in recent years, has been the development that universities have undergone in many countries all over the world. Today's universities

are no longer isolated from society; they have rather thrown their doors wide open to assume an important role in workers' education. This is illustrated by the Open University in the United Kingdom and by the Community College in the United States of America.

In fact, the role of the university in workers' education varies from one country to the other. Some universities have, for instance, opened their doors to workers who want to join studies with a view to obtaining certificates, while others have set up specialised studies in workers' education; some universities even award higher degrees in workers' education. All these are trends which have appeared in universities, following the Montreal Conference (1960)[41].

Yet, the part played by universities in workers' education in the various countries depends on how the universities look upon their responsibilities as a whole and how far are the expenses involved for education in other institutions. In some countries, universities do not consider the extension of their services to society as part of their responsibilities, and that is the trend from which the developing countries in general, and the Arab countries in particular, are suffering. On the other hand, there is a different trend in many countries which find that university participation is significant in extra-mural studies (public services) and in the field of adult education, workers' education, etc. Anyhow, something which strikes our attention today is the fact that the role of universities in workers' education has known some expansion.

It may be noted that a considerable number of specialised departments has been set up for adult education, as the workers' education in European, American, Canadian and Some African universities. Several institutes for workers' education have also been established in the sixties of this century. Workers' education has indeed started emerging as an independent branch of education in many countries.

Expansion in workers' education has necessitated a widespread mobilisation of workers who are able to formulate and organise programmes, as well as a mobilisation of educators who are able to assist workers in undertaking increasingly varied types of activities. That is why we find many countries running more training programmes, which vary between courses leading to Masters' or Doctorate degrees awarded by many universities and one-year courses leading to higher diplomas or certificates in workers' education, besides seminars held for part-time instructors in workers' education.

There is now a growing number of universities and institutions for higher studies in the developed and some developing countries which award degrees, diplomas or doctorates in workers' education at higher levels than the vocational training for workers in the field of workers' education. Following is a list of some of the fields in which training is offered for people engaged in the field of workers' education in many of the developed countries. Such training comprises[42]:

- Studies at university level.
- Studies at University graduates' level.
- Studies ending with higher diplomas.
- Studies (intermittent) for workers.
- Part-time studies for administrators or instructors engaged in part-time duties.

5. Proposals Regarding Arab Universities Activity in Workers' Education

Arab universities can start or supplement their activities in the field of workers' education by setting up joint committees with trade union organizations to study such activity and to find means of improving and developing it. Some proposed topics which such joint committees may start discussing can be listed as:

a) Increased interest in workers' problems in universities regular programmes.

In order to turn the Arab society into a community of producers, universities should develop their programmes so as tc make serious studies, paving the way for such a new society. The programmes of all the faculties of the universities should be imbued with the necessary studies to make their students aware of the producer society and of the value of mental as well as manual labour of the workers' concept of the

non-exploitation of man by his fellow-man and of workers in general, their trade union organizations, their national obligations and related studies, to bring the university graduate closer to workers and their organizations and enable him to co-operate with them in all organs responsible for the development and organization of society in general.

In the report of the Conference on the Role of Universities and Colleges in Workers' Education (Geneva, 1973), it was suggested that:[43] "trade unions officers responsible for workers' education should be directly involved in the guidance and control of workers' education". Going on to selection procedures for workers' education courses, the feeling was that these should be established by the trade unions while the universities should apply flexible academic standards that would best meet the requirements and experience of the worker-students.

University research and studies should likewise be directed to issues and problems related to that new society so that university students and graduates may experience the real situations prevailing in their societies and thus be closely linked with the main issues confronting these societies. And society would in turn benefit from the studies and solutions thus put forward by the universities on the main social problems.

b) Expansion of extra-mural studies and their scope of activity

The experiment of extra-mural studies has recorded a marked success in some Arab universities. This success, besides the current circumstances prevailing in the Arab region, no doubt calls for the inclusion of extra-mural studies in the programmes of Arab universities. Moreover, such studies should be developed so as to focus mainly on workers' interests and needs. In this respect, universities may also have recourse to some lecturers from the worker' ranks.

In this respect, the report of the Conference mentioned above stated that: "The teaching staff for workers' education programmes should have a trade union and preferably a university- or equivalent academic background. Where this target was not possible, a small nucleus of teachers with both experiences could be supplemented by others in the creation of an adequate teaching faculty. Whatever their background, it was desirable for teachers to maintain strong ties with trade union organizations and to share their aims"44.

Special efforts must be made to harness the experience and practice known to trade unionists, by providing training for them, so that they may become effective instructors within workers' education programmes. In this connection, an adequate supply of teaching materials could be the single greatest factor in assisting such instructors. Teachers' unions, which show increasing signs of militancy and a desire to become part of the mainstream of unionims, constitute a relatively

untapped resource for this purpose. An important fringe benefit that may derive from involving teachers in workers' education programmes, is the role that such teachers might play in improving the educational systems, the content of text books, etc.

c) Co-operation with workers' education organs

Arab universities should co-operate with workers' education organs which are currently found in the Arab countries. This could be through:

- Co-operation in laying down courses and programmes.
- Co-operation in research, studies and statistical surveys.
- Provision of lecturers from among those committed to labour thought to deliver some theoretical lectures.
- Extension of facilities to workers to have training in laboratories of some universities.
- Consolidation of the libraries of workers' education organs and extension of lending facilities to workers at university libraries.

In this matter, the report of the Conference (Geneva, 1973) devotes considerable space to Courses and Content. The part played by the union member in union and community should be emphasized because trade unionists, along with others, are 'agents of change'. Therefore, a major aim of such courses must be to develop the trade unionists' confidence in himself and in his union, to be able to cope with the

internal and external problems of the labour movement. Residential long-term and short-term courses were discussed and it was pointed out that to extend the advantages gained at residential courses follow-up procedures were essential, even if through short weekend or other sessions, or by contact through correspondence. Cultural activities are essential to a well rounded resindential programme.[45].

Significantly, the conferees had this to say about the scope of workers' education:

> "All post-secondary education, be it university or other, can be related to workers' education. Because of the rapid and new global developments taking place, the needs in workers' education should be under constant review. Issues, such as those of new technology, world-wide inflation, the prices of primary commodities and other issues of international trade, the energy crises and so on, are today matters of basic concern to workers all over the world and should be jointly examined at the international trade union level".[46].

d) Establishment of workers' education institutes with joint university/trade union administration.

Some universities, which have made some marked progress in the field of adult education, may start the experiment of establishing institutes devoted to workers' education on the pattern of the British Ruskin College in co-operation with the trade union organizations.

However, agreements should be reached with these organizations as regards the programmes and curricula of such an institute and efforts should also be made to have recourse to lecturers drawn from among the workers.

e) Support for the workers' university

Universities should extend their support to the Workers' University which the Egyptian Trade Unions Federation has decided to set up. The universities should provide it with the technical and scientific potentials it requires and they should assist in the planning of its programmes and all the studies it will offer.

Dealing with support of workers' education[47], it was recognized that there are many different schemes for financing workers' aeducation. The main concern is that workers' education, whose tasks were noted as practically limitless, should not be slowed down through controls imposed from the outside, whether they be public or other. Some fear was expressed that single source funding might lead to administrative dpendence. In this connection, it was noted that whether or not specific financial contribution is accepted, such acceptence does not depend on the offers, but on the conditions under which they are made. In no case should trade unions do anything which would be detrimental to their autonomy.

The funding of workers' education by employers should only be agreed upon between the most representative trade unions and the

universities concerned; workers' education is not a commodity to be bought in the market place. No objection was made to employers' collaboration, as expressed by the conferees, "when it takes the form of collective bargaining of legislative arrangements, such as paid educational leave, day-release courses or reimbursement of fees to the worker-student". Fellowships, scholarships, bursaries and other benefits negotiated as part of collective agreement, were strongly urged as they become an obligation of the part of management and are in fact of the wage and benefits structure.

Considerable emphasis was placed on the value of the unions' contribution in any joint workers' education programme. It was recognized that union finances do not permit extensive contributions, but that it was important that the gesture be made. The trade union contribution, like that of some universities, may be in kind. On the university side, it might be through the provision of teaching staff, classrooms, research and reference resources and, as far as the unions are concerned, through the assignment of a union officer who would be concerned with all arrangements, but particularly with those that affect the membership and the administrative details directly related to the unions themselves.

In general, co-operation between universities and workers' education should be bilateral. Universities should enrich workers' education with new scientific potentials and developments, while the workers should enhance the universities' background with the latest

developments in labour thought and in issues or problems related to producers. Such co-operation should take place in the context of the trade-union principle which stipulates that "workers' education is the responsibility of the workers and their trade union organizations". That is the only way in which this co-operation can always be maintained and developed to serve the interests of workers and of society at large.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper is to study the best way of increasing awareness of the vital importance of workers' education in the Arab region and, for a variety of reasons, the climate is right for a careful appraisal of past achievements, present programmes and future possibilities in the field of the Arab universities' assistance to workers' education. It should, however, be made perfectly clear at the outset, that the main responsibility for the major decisions in workers' education must remain, as always, with the trade unions and other workers' organizations.

Its objective is essentially to contribute to the elaboration and thereby to the relevance and effectiveness of Arab universities programmes in this area, which must be related to the economic and social framework within the Arab countries, by submitting suggestions to the authorities of the higher education and universities on the

preparation or implementation of its plan of activities on this subject.

Thus, the paper focusses on the role of workers and their trade union organizations in the Arab region, its present and future, the role of Arab universities and workers' education, following an example of university activity in the workers' education programmes of some non-Arab countries, making proposals regarding Arab universities' activity in labour education.

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